

Message Text

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AFDROUGHT

SUBJECT: OSRO STATUS REPORT ON SAHEL; FOOD MOVEMENTS NIGER/CHAD

REF: ROME 5989

1. FOLLOWING DRAFTED OSRO (NEHEMIAH) MAY 2 OSRO 1998 WITZ FOR MORSE. HAPPY TO INFORM SERIOUS DISLOCATION MOVEMENT FOOD SUPPLIES TO NIGER AND CHAD ARRIVING NIGERIA PORTS APAPA AND PORT HARCOURT NOW OVERCOME. BREAKDOWN OF 33 OUT OF 54 CANADIAN LOCOMOTIVES AND DISPERSAL RAILWAY WAGONS ACCORDING TO REVISED PLAN REDUCED MOVEMENTS FOODGRAINS FOR NIGER AND CHAD FROM 11,000 TONS TO 1,000 TONS PER MONTH. COMMERCIAL TRUCKS EXPLOITED SITUATION BY WITHHOLDING ROAD TRANSPORT FOR CONTINUOUSLY INCREASING HIGH COSTS. CANADIAN TECHNICIANS REPAIRING LOCOMOTIVES BUT FULL CAPACITY MAY NOT BE RESOTRED UNTIL END JUNE. PAGE, CHIEF LOGISTICS OFFICER, REPORTED FROM LAGOD THIS MORNING (MAY 2) THAT WITH HIGH COOPERATION NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES AND LOCAL US AID REPRESENTATIVE MR. SNYDER NEW ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT BOTH FOR RAIL AND ROAD TRANSPORT ASSURING MOVEMENT 1,500 TONS PER DAY. NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO ALLOCATE 25 WAGONS PER DAY WHICH WILL MOVE BY UNCLASSIFIED

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RAIL 500 TONS DAILY. WITH COOPERATION ALL CONCERNED 400 NIGERIAN

TRUCKS EACH CAPACITY 30 TONS MOBILIZED WICH WILL MOVE 1,000 TONS DAILY USING 40 TRUCKS IN A ROTATION 10 DAY PERIOD FOR DELIVERY AND RETURN. ARRANGMENTS WILL LAST 60 DAYS AND MOVE BY ROAD 75,000 TONS BOTH TO NIGER AND CHAD WHICH MOST ADEQUATE COMPARING MONTHLY NEEDS.

2. OSRO AGREED TO PAY \$800,000 TO MEET DIFFERENCE TOWARD RAIL CHARGES AND INCREASED ROAD TRANSPORT COSTS PENDING NEGOTIATIONS WITH BILATERAL DONORS FOR SUCH COSTS. WITHOUT SUCH ACTION NIGER WOULD EXPERIENCE UNTOLD DIFFICULTIES. NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT PROVIDED ALL POSSIBLE HELP AND IS ARRANGING MEETING TODAY WITH REPRESENTATIVES MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, RAILWAYS, PORT TRUST, LOCAL FORWARDING/CLEARING AGENTS AND PAGE REPRESENTING FAO AND NIGER GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS FURTHER. PLEASE THANK NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE ON OUR BEHALF. MORE FUNDS WOULD ENABLE OSRO TO OVERCOME SUCH SERIOUS TRANSPORT PROBLEMS. HOWEVER FOR MOVEMENT SUPPLIES TO REMOTE AREAS WE HAVE STILL TO DEPEND ON CONVOYS NOW BEING ORGANIZED. STEVENSON NOW IN LONDON NEGOTIATING ADDITIONAL HELP, IF POSSIBLE TO TRANSPORT US CONVOY TRUCKS BY AIR. BASED ON OFFICIAL REQUEST RECEIVED FROM CHIEF OF STATE NIGER, HAVE APPROVED OSRO FINANCING PURCHASE IMMEDIATELY 1,000 TONS RICE FROM DAHOMEY AT TOTAL COST \$540,000 TO MEET IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION RICE. UNOFFICIALLY UNDERSTAND US AID CONSIDER DIVERSION 10,000 TONS FOODGRAINS INTENDED NIGER TO ALGERIAN PORTS FOR TRANSPORT ACROSS SAHARA BY MOBILIZING ALGERIAN COMMERCIAL TRUCKS WHICH WOULD MEET ESSENTIAL NEEDS NORTHERN PARTS NIGER. WISH TO ASSURE THAT OSRO DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO OVERCOME RECENT TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES NIGER AND PRE-POSITIONING STOCKS BEFORE RAINS SET IN. MESSAGE OVER.VOLPE

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